

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COORDINATING COUNCIL

ELDERLY and DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COMMITTEE

MINUTES for September 3, 2014

The DVCC Elderly and Domestic Violence Committee met on September 3, 2014 at 2:00 p.m. at the Carvel State Office Building, Wilmington. Attending the meeting were: Gina Schoenberg, Department of Justice, Regina Gray, Delaware Center for Justice; Alana Wilder, Wilmington Police Department - Victim Services; Cindy Mercer, Division of Services for Aging and Adults with Disabilities; Natasha Smith and Pat Kwetkauskie - DVCC staff. Dawn Culp, Bayhealth participated by telephone

Call to Order: Gina Schoenberg called the meeting to order.

Introductions: Attendees introduced themselves.

Approval of Minutes: The Minutes from the meeting held on July 8, 2014 were approved by consensus and without objection.

Old Business:

1. Gina Schoenberg announced that Pat Dailey-Lewis was unable to attend the meeting and requested that Old Business be tabled.
2. Gina noted that Pat Dailey-Lewis would report on the following at the next meeting:
 - Expanding Committee Membership
 - Update on Judicial Training topics

New Business

1. There was discussion about the Goals for the Committee. Gina noted there were common themes and interests submitted by the Committee for consideration. These include:
 - Provide education to the judiciary and law enforcement and promote awareness of domestic violence to older members of the community;
 - Identify/expand emergency and safe transitional housing options for elderly who are victims of domestic violence; and
 - Develop a statewide corps of volunteer peer advocates to provide advocacy and accompaniment to elderly victims throughout the criminal justice process.
2. There was discussion about specialized services for elderly victims of domestic violence.
 - Emergency Shelter - Gina and Pat Kwetkauskie will research information on existing emergency shelter/housing programs located in Maryland and California
 - Volunteer peer-based court advocacy network – There were several groups identified where volunteer recruitment might occur. These include the Retired

Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), local chapters of the AARP and First State.

It was noted that a similar volunteer advocacy program may have existed in the past; however, no one present was certain. It was agreed that it would be beneficial to obtain the history of previous initiatives that were comparable to what the Committee is exploring.

3. There was discussion about education to law enforcement concerning the circumstances that would require elderly victims to pursue a formal process in order to remove someone who is hurting or exploiting them from their home.
 - Natasha Smith suggested that this topic could be addressed during the lunch time session of the annual STOP Grant training to law enforcement that will be held on November 17, 2014. She will approach the Law Enforcement Training Workgroup to see if this time slot is available.
4. Dawn Culp noted that the “Live Safe and Secure” conference directed toward older Delawareans as well as service providers would be held on October 13th in Sussex County. Cindy Mercer will send the link with conference information and registration to the Committee.
5. The Committee identified the need to identify resources and funding in order to implement its goals.

Next Steps

1. Gina Schoenberg and Pat Kwetkauskie will report on the results of their efforts to identify specialized emergency shelter programs for elderly victims of domestic violence. Pat will contact staff from the Criminal Justice Council and inquire about the history of prior programs that included peer based civil legal and criminal justice advocacy services to elderly victims of domestic violence.
2. The Committee will continue its discussion about potential sources of funding such grants through the Office of violence Against Women.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the DVCC Elderly and Domestic Violence Committee will be held on November 13, 2014 at 3:00 p.m. The meeting location will be the 5th Floor Conference Room in the Attorney General’s Office, Carvel State Office Building in Wilmington.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pat Kwetkauskie, DVCC Staff
October 17, 2014